

## FOUR MONTH OLD

### Safety:

- At four months of age, everything your infant grasps goes directly to his/her mouth. Keep peanuts, plastic bags, coins, sharp objects away from your child. Teach siblings not to bring small objects (legos, etc.) to infant. If there is an older sibling a playpen becomes a safe refuge from the clutter on the floor.
- Never leave your child in the bathtub or on a high surface unsecured-even for a few seconds.
- Always use a *car seat*. Infants should be rear facing until at least 2 years of age. The safest place is the back seat, ideally the center back seat. Never put an infant in the front seat with an air bag.

### Development:

- Your infant is cooing, may shriek or grunt, laughing, smiling responsively, reaching for objects, grasping objects, tracking 180 degrees across the room and turning to sound.
- Rolling is quite variable and often occurs between 4 and 6 months.
- Your child is becoming more social and more fun!

### Sleep:

- Develop a bedtime routine: (i.e. feed your baby, brush teeth once present, read/rock to him/her, put child down to sleep while drowsy but awake).
- At four months many children sleep through the night (eight or more hours). If your child falls asleep independently, he/she may get back to sleep in the night easier on awakenings. When your child awakens in the middle of the night, it is reasonable to let her cry for a few minutes to see if she will fall back to sleep on her own or try patting or rocking instead of feeding.
- Avoid swaddling for sleep now (as your baby may be rolling over soon).

### Diet:

- Formula with iron or breast milk is total nutrition. AAP recommends vitamin D supplement (400 IU/day) for all mostly breastmilk fed infants.
- If your baby is ready, it's time to start solids! Let baby lead. You may offer purees or "squishable" foods once or twice a day. There is no need to force foods. Food is for exploration, not nutrition.
- Once starting solids, breastfed babies need to focus on getting some iron rich foods daily (fortified cereals, green vegetables, meats).
- The newest evidence has shown that early introduction of allergenic foods decreases the risk of food allergy. Once your infant has tried a few early solids, we recommend introduction of allergenic foods at home (nuts, eggs, wheat, soy, dairy, fish) with observation. Offer an initial taste, then if tolerated, the food can be introduced in gradual, increasing amounts and continued at least twice a week.
- Avoid honey until at least one year.

### Tips:

- All children drool and put things in their mouth at this age (even if their teeth are not coming in!). The first teeth erupt between 4 and 12 months. If you think your child is teething, let him/her gnaw on a cold washcloth, teething ring or fingers.
- Provide opportunity for your child to reach/grasp/roll toward objects. Talk, sing and read to your baby.
- It is important for parents to look out for their own well being. Consider getting a baby sitter and going to dinner alone.

### Medications:

- Acetaminophen** (Tylenol, paracetamol, APAP)

Oral Suspension (160mg per 5mL)

12 to 18 pounds: 2.5mL = ½ teaspoon (80mg) each 4-6 hours  
18 to 24 pounds: 3.75mL = ¾ teaspoon (120mg) each 4-6 hrs  
24 to 30 pounds: 5mL = 1 teaspoon (160mg) each 4-6 hours

- We generally do not recommend ibuprofen, antihistamines and decongestants before 6 months of age.

Visit our website for further health information and links to other medical sites: [www.ballardpeds.com](http://www.ballardpeds.com)

Ballard Pediatrics: 206 783 9300

Your next visit should be when the baby is **SIX months** old. Please allow 2 months advance notice when scheduling. Well child appointments fill up quickly!

Updated June 2025